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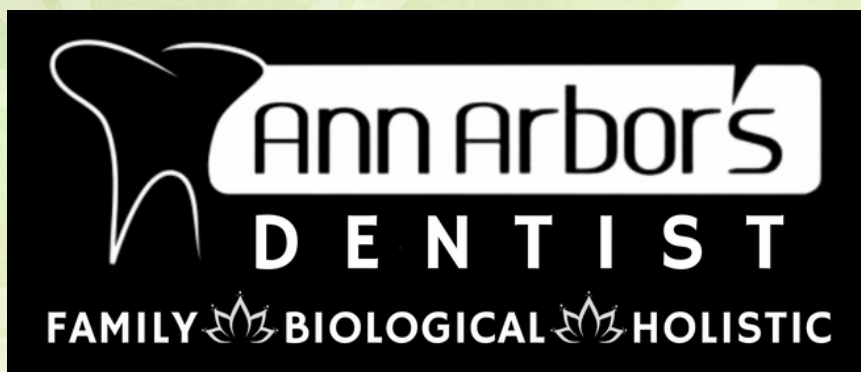
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30th Anniversary



by Kimberly Whittle

Humans are social creatures by nature, and leaning into community is key to a long and healthy life. Look no further than the five so-called Blue Zones in places around the planet where people regularly live to be 100 years old. While eating nutritious food and exercising regularly are important aspects to a healthy lifestyle, Dan Buettner, a Blue Zones expert, believes part of the secret to a long and healthy life is finding purpose and doing it with help from a meaningful community.

Buettner's observations are supported by research. An article published in the *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine* summarized the significant evidence that connection to a community helps people physically and mentally with improvements in weight control, blood sugar levels, cancer survival, cardiovascular health and overall mental health, as well as a notable mitigation of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. In a Brigham Young University meta-analysis of 148 studies to determine the effect of social relationships on the risk of mortality, researchers reported that social connections with friends, family, neighbors or colleagues improved the odds of living longer by 50 percent.

A Nexus for Consciousness, Healing and Hope

Natural Awakenings, a pioneering magazine founded to educate and connect communities for healthy living on a healthy planet, is celebrating its 30th anniversary. In this digital era, *Natural Awakenings* continues to stand at the vanguard along with its parent company, KnoWEwell, and its Regenerative Whole Health Hub (Hub). The one-of-its-kind Hub uniquely builds communities, enables trusted connections to people and businesses, provides evidence-based resources, as well as local provider and thought-leader education and healing programs.

As global stressors continue to arise, now more than ever, it's important to us at Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation and KnoWEwell to expand our community's impact to inspire, empower and connect our ecosystem locally, nationally and globally. We will be bringing our readers immersive engagement and learning opportunities, and amplifying our local businesses through multimedia publishing and business services in our local *Natural Awakenings* online communities, as well as within KnoWEwell's Regenerative Whole Health Hub.

As we enter our fourth decade, our print magazine will continue to grow while we embrace the ever-expanding new era of digital enlightenment. We intend to continue to be a beacon of hope and a connector for safe, trusted connections to real people, authentic experts, education, and our natural, integrative and whole-health communities. We are creating new opportunities for our readers to learn from and engage with local business owners, as well as national and global experts through the Hub by:





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30th Anniversary

- Bringing articles to life and expanding services to local business owners to help them share their unique qualities, expertise and stories in online inspirational and educational webcasts and videos
- Engaging online community book discussions with luminaries such as Deepak Chopra (see *ChopraQuantumBodyDiscussion.KnoWEwell.com*)
- Providing access to immersive learning directories and 200-plus topic-specific communities
- Helping people find their best-matched providers, community members, businesses and locally grown foods based on their needs, values and preferences
- Saving members money with discounts on organic foods, courses, healing programs, products and services
- We promise to remain steadfast in our commitment to high-quality, evidence-based journalism to help our readers stay current and make informed decisions for sustainable, regenerative healthy living. Beginning this month and throughout our 30th year, we invite our readers and business owners to check out what's new in our print magazines and online. We hope everyone loves our fresh new magazine design this month.

We invite all to engage and connect with like-minded communities, submit feedback for a chance to be included in the new, "Members Comments" department of our magazine, and share your favorite businesses to help us continue to build trusted resources locally and globally. Together, we will be the change we seek in the world to build regenerative communities one at a time to achieve WELLthier Living: Happy. Healthy. Abundant. Purpose-Filled, People and Planet.

Kimberly Whittle is the founder and CEO of KnoWEwell, P.B.C., and the CEO of Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation. Learn more about her personal journey and purpose at [KnoWEwell.com/written-content/steppingstones-WELLthier-living](https://www.knowewell.com/written-content/steppingstones-WELLthier-living).

What's New and Coming in 2024 at **Natural Awakenings**

Sign up today to be the first to know what's coming and what's new:

- Expansion online to all 50 U.S. states with interactive digital magazines
- New fresh look for our print magazine, websites and online communities
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- Love us! Own Your Own franchise! Learn more at [Corp.NaturalAwakenings.com](https://www.Corp.NaturalAwakenings.com).





Celebrating the Past and Embracing the Future

As we step into 2024, we're pleased to announce that this year marks a noteworthy 30-year milestone for Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation (NAPC). Back in 1994, Sharon Bruckman published the first edition of *Natural*

Awakenings magazine in Naples, Florida, launching what subsequently evolved into a national franchise which spreads natural, healthy, eco- and conscious-living content all across the country through a network of local magazine publishers/franchisees like us.

In this month's Wise Words department, Bruckman shares that the real "natural awakening" for all of us means we are each waking up to who we truly are, and then together creating the kind of world we want to live in today and onward. The magazine's tag line, "Healthy Living. Healthy Planet" is therefore thoughtfully intentional, meant to empower individuals to choose a healthier lifestyle and contribute to a sustainable planet that we can all share for years to come.

Close to our hearts, as we celebrate the franchise's 30th anniversary, is John's late father and Bruckman's original business partner—NAPC visionary, co-founder and Vice President John Voell, "J2"—whose adventurous enthusiasm helped expand *Natural Awakenings'* reach exponentially. Today, communities throughout the U.S. enjoy the magazine's monthly editorial highlighting the latest developments in natural health and green living while connecting readers with local wellness resources and events inspiring them to lead a more balanced life. Collectively, this nationwide community

comprises a gathering movement of individuals that embrace the magazine's mission. It is clear that myriad lives still benefit from the legacy Bruckman and J2 brought forth so many years ago. We are honored that we've been a part of upholding this for the last 18 years, and are looking ahead to the future with joyful anticipation.

The momentum behind all of this progress remains quite a ride. In 2022, NAPC welcomed Kimberly Whittle to the helm as its new owner and CEO, and she has since merged our magazine network with KnoWEwell, an online hub uniting readers and practitioners across the globe. This symbiotic collaboration means NAPC's reach is expanding to even greater heights and the pool of resources available to bring you the cutting-edge information we know you have come to love and expect from *Natural Awakenings* each month has also grown.

We'd be remiss if we didn't take a moment to give a grateful shout out at this time to the advertisers, distributors, staff and contributors that help the six magazine editions we own to take wing each month. There are many special advertising partners that have been with us since our very first month, and we hope that you will also thank them all by shopping at their stores, using their services and seeking out their expertise. We'd also like to thank you, our beloved readers, for picking up *Natural Awakenings* each month and joining other kindred spirits in our collective journey of appreciation for an awakened life.

Our hope this month is that the content within these pages helps to renew your perspective on the future as we embrace another year and the opportunity to continue or start over as an older and slightly wiser version of ourselves. It really is the perfect time to take hold of the promise and potential within us. Wishing you all the bliss, magic and hope of a blessed new year. And here's to another 30 years of *Natural Awakenings*!

With love,

Trina & John

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Advertising & Submissions

Natural Awakenings is a network of natural lifestyle magazine publishers empowering local communities with knowledge, resources and connections to lead healthier lives on a healthy planet.

Natural Awakenings 30th Anniversary

It was 30 years ago this month that *Natural Awakenings* was first launched in Naples, Florida. We offer a heartfelt thank you to the loyal readers that have come to know and love this media brand and allowed it to flourish. We are deeply grateful to the advertisers and community partners that promote green living, healthy people, healthy pets and a healthy planet with their products, services and information. Without them and the readers that support them, this magazine could not offer outstanding journalism and inspirational content each month without cost to the community.

As has been the practice for the last 30 years, *Natural Awakenings* continues to adapt its concepts, content and communication to reflect the needs of our community without losing sight of our mission. This month's new look is the first of several exciting enhancements that are coming in 2024. See the article and list of what's new in 2024 on pages 4 and 5.



Graceful Aging Webcast Series

Join *Natural Awakenings* and *KnowEwell* for an inspirational *Graceful Aging* webcast series, the first of which begins with Gladys McGarey, M.D., the Mother of Holistic Medicine, 103 years young and author of *The Well-Lived Life: A 102-Year-Old Doctor's Six Secrets to Health and*

Gladys McGarey, M.D. Happiness at Every Age.



Start the New Year Right with Sarah Girard



Sarah Girard

Sarah Girard, BS, LMT, owner of Elevate Mind & Bodywork, is accepting new clients for embodied lymphatic therapy and reiki sessions. She is trained in manual lymphatic drainage through the Chikly Health Institute (Dr. Bruno Chikly), is a Usui/Holy Fire™ III Reiki master, and has been a bodyworker in the healing arts for 10 years.

Girard advises, "Start your year off right by making your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being a priority. You can expect to set goals in a space of healing and peace, seek clarity in life choices, connect

with your body and intuitive nature, as well as develop a sense of ease while elevating to a pain- and stress-free place in your life. Manual lymphatic drainage, combined with reiki energy work, is a powerful combination in managing chronic inflammatory conditions, improving wellness and well-being, expediting recovery from illness or surgery and processing trauma. You're invited to get back in touch with your physical vessel and its innate knowing."

Location: 1140 N. Wagner Rd., Ann Arbor. For appointments and more information, call 734-883-1383, email SarahGirard.lmt@gmail.com or visit Elevate.MassageTherapy.com. See ad page 31.

Virtual Holiday Yoga Classes



Crysterra Wellness is offering Virtual Holiday Yoga, with three weekly class options, through January 4. Restorative Yoga: Relax and restore with this gentle, stress-relieving yoga practice. Create harmony and

balance of body and mind through physical postures, breathing techniques and an extended guided relaxation at the end of class.

Yoga Nidra: Yogic sleep is a deep relaxation practice that has been shown to reduce stress, tension and anxiety, as well as calm symptoms of chronic pain, headaches, depression and high blood pressure by balancing the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems and the left and right hemispheres of the brain.

Gentle Basic Flow Yoga: This gentle yoga practice encourages moving slowly and mindfully through a series of fluid postures and breathing techniques to fully connect with the present. Participants can improve physical and mental balance, flexibility and strength, then enjoy an extended relaxation at the end of this restorative practice.

Cost is \$15 per class or \$50 unlimited. Register at Andrea@CrysterraWellness.com. Location: 3173 Baker Rd., Ste. A, Dexter (classes are held online). For more information, call 734-649-1849 or visit CrysterraWellness.com. See ad page 31.

~ Advertorial ~

New Product PolarAid® is Now Available



PolarAid® is a revolutionary, affordable, new body tool that supports wellness, well-being and an improved quality of life that was first demonstrated by Nikola Tesla and Dr. Georges Lakhovsky and adapted for today's proactive consumer by Dr. Dino Tomic. There have been hundreds of authentic, compelling testimonials to its benefits.

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For more information, including viewing an informative video on using the product, and to order, visit PolarAidHealth.com or call 450-486-7888. See ad page 19.

January Savings at Wycoff Wellness Center



Wycoff Wellness Center will ring in a healthy new year with once-a-year savings on unique treatments and supplements through January 31.

Patrons can improve their health and wellness naturally and save with 20 percent off quality supplements both at the office or online, and 20 percent off all unique treatment packages.

Location: 1226 Michigan Ave., East Lansing. For more information, call 517-333-7270 or visit WycoffWellness.com. See ad back cover.

Billie Tobin Life Skills Strategy Mentor



Billie Tobin

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious, stressed and emotionally drained is the norm these days, but Billie Tobin, CEO of A Step Ahead, can help find balance and clarity. Her alternative methods are designed to support and relieve body systems, allowing people to overcome anxiety, depression and confusion. She says, "Harmonize your body system and gain clarity, so you can manage your health and well-being."

With years of experience in holistic wellness, Tobin has helped many individuals regain their health and happiness. Whether struggling with anxiety, depression, confusion or simply seeking clarity in life, she is here to help. Tobin's practical methods to navigate life easily have people from all

walks of life regain their emotional well-being and inner peace, locally and globally.

Now more than ever, having a system of navigating through life that works is crucial. Her proven strategies have helped clients regain their emotional well-being and inner peace. Tobin's holistic approach combines various techniques to address individual, unique needs and create a path toward wellness and happiness.

For more information, call 248-789-1980 or visit Rand.page/astepahead.

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"We need to preserve a few places, a few samples of primeval country so that when the pace gets too fast we can look at it, think about it, contemplate it, and somehow restore equanimity to our souls."

— Sigurd Olson



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INSULIN RESISTANCE AND WEIGHT LOSS



Insulin resistance is the number one barrier to weight loss. Overcoming it requires the correct eating and exercise program, along with the correct supplements and possibly medications. More importantly, individuals need an expert with experience and success to guide them down the pathway to long-term success.

A comprehensive weight-loss program optimizes hormone function to defeat insulin resistance. Worldwide, the prevalence of insulin resistance ranges from 15.5 to 46.5 percent among adults. It is estimated in the United States, at least 33 percent of children and adults have insulin resistance, but the actual number may be closer to 50 percent.

Living in America is a risk factor for insulin resistance. It is critical that patients understand that only a multi-pronged approach including diet, exercise, supplements and behavioral medication will cure this major issue. The important thing to realize is that treatment is obtainable and effective.

John O. Wycoff, DO, is the founder and CEO of Wycoff Wellness, in East Lansing. He is a board-certified physician who has dedicated his life to helping patients find integrative and functional solutions to their healthcare issues. See ad back cover.

BLOOD TEST TO DETECT PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Researchers led by a team from Duke Health have developed a blood test to detect Parkinson's disease, which afflicts 10 million people globally and is the second most common neurodegenerative



disorder. The illness causes unintended or uncontrollable movements, such as shaking, stiffness and difficulty with balance and coordination. Symptoms start slowly and worsen over time.

Until now, diagnosing Parkinson's relied on a person's medical history, a neurological examination and observable symptoms.

An accurate diagnosis is critical because there are other disorders with Parkinson's-like symptoms that require different treatments.

The Duke Health blood test focuses on DNA damage in mitochondria, the energy-converting factories within cells. Patients with Parkinson's had higher levels of mitochondrial DNA damage in blood cells, as compared to patients without the disease. The test also detects specific genetic mutations that are associated with an increased risk of the disease, which may be able to help doctors predetermine whether certain therapies would be effective on their patients. Researchers hope the new blood test will not only diagnose Parkinson's disease, but also identify drugs that reverse or halt mitochondrial DNA damage and the disease process.

FLUORIDE EXPOSURE AND COGNITIVE DEFICITS IN CHILDREN

Since 1945, cities and municipalities in the United States have added fluoride to community water systems to prevent tooth decay. As of 2020, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that nearly 73 percent of Americans have fluoridated water; however, there is growing concern about the negative effects of fluoride exposure.

An article in *Neurotoxicology and Teratology*, a publication dedicated to the effects of chemical and physical agents on the nervous system, investigated the association between fluoride ex-



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posure in drinking water and cognitive deficits among children. The study involved 74 school-aged children living in rural Ethiopia. Researchers measured the participants' exposure to fluoride through samples of community-based drinking-water wells and urine samples.

Cognitive performance was measured using two assessments: the children's ability to draw familiar objects and a standardized memory and new-learning assessment. The results showed that fluoride levels in drinking water were negatively associated with cognitive function, and that cognitive deficits were particularly strong among children exposed to high levels of fluoride.

The study's authors highlighted the need for additional studies involving children and adults to understand the potential neurotoxicity of low fluoride levels known to protect against dental cavities, as well as the effects of elevated fluoride levels in drinking water. Such research is essential to protect the cognitive health of children and to inform public health policymaking.

SLEEP REGULARITY FOR LONGER LIFE



The findings from a study published in the journal *Sleep* highlight that sleep regularity, defined as the day-to-day consistency of sleep-wake timing, is a powerful predictor of mortality risk. The Sleep Regularity Index (SRI) was calculated from over 10 million hours of data from 60,977 participants in the UK Biobank.

The study found that a higher SRI was associated with a 20 to 57 percent lower risk of mortality, even after adjusting for various factors such as age, sex, ethnicity, lifestyle and health biomarkers. Sleep regularity was associated with lower risks of all-cause, cancer and cardiometabolic mortality across the top four SRI groups compared to the least regular group. Importantly, sleep regularity outperformed sleep duration as a predictor of mortality risk, indicating its potential as an important predictor of health and longevity. Further research is needed to establish causality and explore the underlying mechanisms.

Have News or a Healthy Tip to Share?
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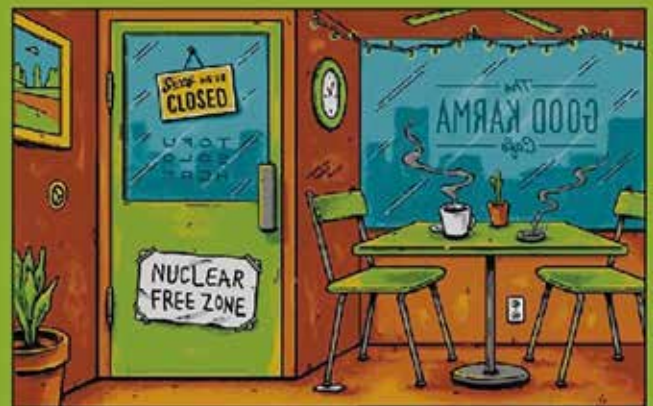
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Pain Relief Using Somatic Movement

Somatic Movement was developed by philosopher Thomas Hanna in the 1970s. He was interested in human freedom, particularly freedom of movement and freedom from pain. Hanna coined the term “somatics” to refer to systems that focus on experiencing sensations from a first-person perspective, or “from within”.

The main benefits of Somatic Movement are releasing unconsciously held muscular tension. We all respond reflexively to stress by tensing our muscles, and over time, the brain and nervous system may gradually adapt to higher levels of tension and hold them as the new “resting” level.

Somatic Movement is an effective way to become more aware of these patterns and then reset them to a more relaxed state. This results in outcomes that include relieving pain, easier breathing, better posture and improved mobility.

One recent study found significant reductions in neck and back pain with just a few

hands-on sessions—on average, pain levels measured on a five-point scale decreased from more than 3 to 0.7 or less, and the use of pain medication declined substantially.

Somatic Movement is different from other modalities in two respects. One is the emphasis on pandiculation, the movement we associate with a yawn—a gentle contraction of the muscles followed by a slow, controlled release—to lower muscle tension levels. When performed deliberately, this can help overcome the nervous system habit of unconsciously holding effort when it is not needed.

The second difference is the emphasis on educating people to use these movements on their own, so they need not rely on a practitioner to achieve freedom. Although hands-on sessions are a faster way to achieve results, group classes or practicing the movements independently are also effective. The best results are achieved by reinforcing hands-on sessions with a few minutes of individual Somatic Movement practice every day.



Phil Howard

Phil Howard is a certified clinical somatic educator and a member of the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association. He offers hands-on, clinical Somatic Movement sessions at Williamston Wellness Health Collective and teaches group classes and workshops in the Lansing area. For more information, call 517-275-2388, email Phil.Howard@zoho.com or visit PhilHoward.net.

Ann Arbor's Dentist

Dr. Keith Dobracki and Dr. Lindsay Holman, owners of Ann Arbor's Dentist, have won quite a few honors for their practice, including Best of Ann Arbor Family, Top Dentist in Detroit, Metro Parent Top Doctor and Top National Biological Dentist. The staff comprises biological certified dentists and holistic hygienists highly accredited in nutrition, functional medicine, naturopathy and preventative health.

A graduate of the University of Michigan Dental School, Dobracki served on the executive board of the Scholars Program in Dental Leadership, and simultaneously completed the Ross School of Business Entrepreneurship Program. He is a featured writer and editorial board member of the national publications *Excellence in Dentistry* and *The Winning Dentist*.

Holman received a DDS degree from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry and has continued her training in integrative dental medicine and biological dentistry by achieving scholar status with the Dawson Academy. She worked as an assistant and then a dental hygienist at the office where her grandmother was the receptionist, where at an early age, she equated the dental office with a welcoming, friendly, positive experience,



Keith Dobracki

and practices with the mindset of treating patients as family.

Dobracki explains, "We began with a mission to make dentistry as natural and as family-friendly as possible. Our family's personal lifestyle choices revolve around organic whole foods, locally sourced products, functional movement, a preventative health approach, a green footprint, proven nutritional supplements, mental wellness and trust/love. We set out to create a dental office that embodies those concepts and allows health-conscious patients to feel secure in the care they receive."

Ann Arbor's Dentist does not use fluoride, heavy metals, BPA or harmful microplas-

tics. "The care we provide is as natural as possible, while being aesthetically pleasing and long-lasting," he says. New patients first share a phone call with a doctor to express their needs and concerns. The office has a Bernese Mountain Dog therapy animal to foster a family atmosphere.

Holman says, "This practice focuses on root cause matters. Instead of seeing your dentist every six months and being told, 'You have a cavity, you need a filling,' we ask, 'Why do you have a cavity and what needs to happen for you to stop getting cavities?' We are able to study the microflora bacterial terrain in your mouth and rebalance it for future prevention. We can detoxify your gum tissues, optimize your airway and cause your teeth to naturally harden."

In addition to clinically proven ways to stop cavities before they become a problem and allow the tooth to naturally remineralize, they provide ozone and laser therapies, while anticipating the future use of stem cells and the ability for teeth and bone to heal themselves.

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Graceful Aging

Living Longer, Healthier and More Fulfilled

by Carrie Jackson

People are living longer, and as we age, we increasingly become aware of a desire to remain healthy, vibrant and active for as long as possible. It's about extending our health span as much as our lifespan. While genetics play a role in how we experience the aging process, advancements in science are helping us understand that how we manage our mindset, physical activity, stress levels and diet can have just as much of an impact. By redefining what it means to get older and finding deeper

meaning, we can embrace aging with grace and gratitude, rather than resist it. Many factors are within our control, and it is possible to live a fulfilling and vibrant life well into our twilight years.

At nearly 103 years young, Dr. Gladys McGarey wrote the book on graceful aging. As the author of *The Well-Lived Life: A 102-Year-Old Doctor's Six Secrets to Health and Happiness at Every Age*, she suggests that we reframe aging as an opportunity

rather than a loss, thereby pioneering a new way of thinking about disease and health. "At 102, I'm losing my eyesight, but my insight has improved," says the cofounder of the American Holistic Medical Association. "I have trouble reading but can listen to audiobooks and have deep conversations with people. If we look for illness and pain at the end of life, that's what our bodies will show us. But if we reach for health, joy, laughter and other realities of true humanity, that's what we will find."

McGarey asserts that our medical community is trained to eliminate pain and illness rather than learn from their messages. “If we can lean into what understanding a disease shows us, we can discover true wisdom,” she explains. “You can hold onto the pain, or you can hold onto what you learn from the pain. When my son was training to be an orthopedic surgeon, he confided that he was afraid to have people’s lives in his hands. I responded that if he thinks he’s the one who does the healing, he has a right to be scared. Doctors provide the technology to turn the healing over to the patient, and we have the core knowledge of what to do inside of us.”

McGarey is a firm believer that forgiveness is essential to freeing up stuck energy. Life has to move, she says, and letting go of

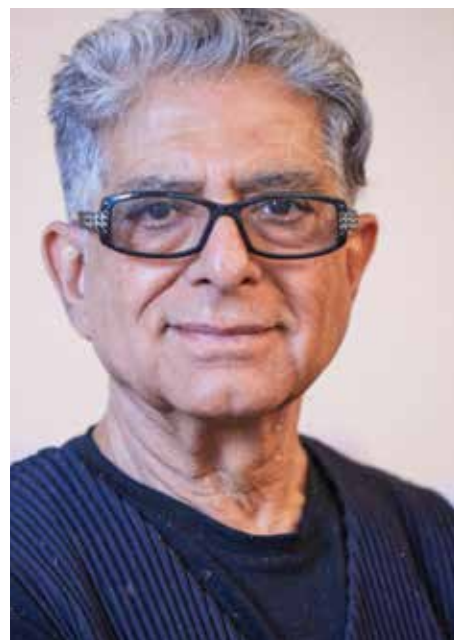
By redefining what it means to get older and finding deeper meaning, we can embrace aging with grace and gratitude, rather than resist it.

Renowned alternative-medicine advocate Deepak Chopra, M.D., is an author, speaker and founder of the Chopra Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to research on well-being and humanitarianism. His latest book, *Quantum Body: The New Science for Living a Longer, Healthier, More Vital Life*, outlines how we can harness the power of the quantum body to significantly improve our physical and mental wellness, leading to a more fulfilling aging process.

According to Chopra, our well-being depends entirely on the quantum field, which

is weakened whenever there is a failure of intelligence and is strengthened when intelligence flows naturally,” he explains.

Disease and aging are further downstream in the intelligence flow, Chopra notes, and when someone succumbs to a heart attack or cancer, intelligence has failed in either the cardiovascular system or a single malignant cell. “Instead of being anxious about cells, tissues, organs and systems, which aren’t under your control, you can live from the source where all controls are overseen by your quantum body. Here, all informa-



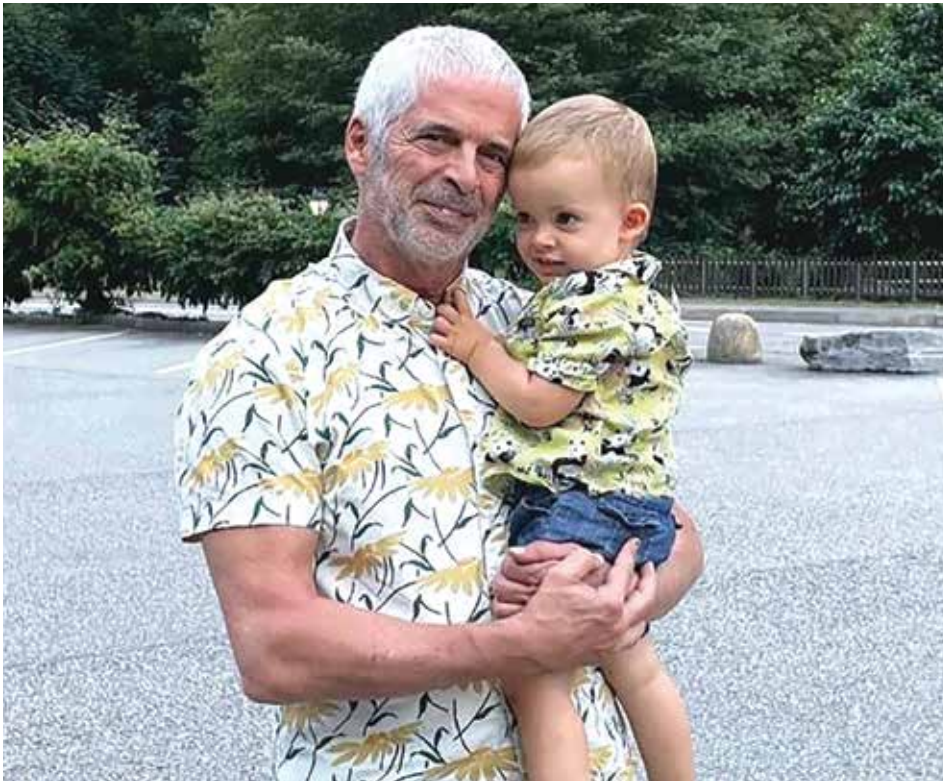
From left, Tom O'Bryan, Gladys McGarey and Deepak Chopra

feelings that may be lingering in our subconscious allows us to move forward with grace. “If we hang on to the dark places in our lives, we will get stuck. Pay attention to your dreams, both during the day and night, because they hold the truth. We all came here for a reason and have our life’s purpose. If you find that, you will always be fulfilled and can embrace the aging process instead of fighting it,” she says.

exists on a subatomic level and is the infinite source of everyday reality that affects our thoughts, feelings, sensations and biological responses. “Your quantum body is the central hub for every process that requires intelligence, just as a power plant is the central hub for everything that requires electricity. The prospect of having your quantum body fail you is far more serious than any single symptom of disease and aging. Well-being

tion is perfect, the flow of intelligence is never wrong or distorted, and the creative possibilities for the future are boundless,” Chopra contends.

One vital aspect of healthy aging that we can control is our approach to stress management, which Chopra says most people don’t take seriously enough. Stress can come from myriad sources, including



Tom O'Bryan, DC, age 70, and his 2-year-old son

family and social relationships; workplace stresses; a poor-quality diet; deficient sleeping habits; lack of exercise and downtime; and constant distractions from texting, video games and around-the-clock news reports. That is why it is more important than ever to develop tools for self-care.

“The frenetic pace of modern life has overwhelmed the autonomic nervous system, which is responsible for all the processes, from heartbeat to respiration and digestion, that run independently of your conscious actions,” Chopra advises. “Medical research validates how essential stress management is, but what needs to change are socially ingrained attitudes that persuade us to tolerate stress beyond what our bodies and psyches are designed for.”

Chopra encourages prioritizing deep sleep, tuning into breath and awareness, and mindful exercises to return to our zero point—a state of rest from which activity springs. “Your awareness experiences the zero point as silent, calm, alert and pregnant with boundless possibilities, where you have access to your next thought,” he explains.

Embracing instead of resisting our quantum body further helps the energy flow. “The most natural way to live is in your dharma, or your truth,” Chopra says. “The greatest gift of self-awareness is that you can prove this to yourself every day by living with love, truth, beauty and bliss as your goal. Ultimate well-being requires no less, and living from your source reveals that the infinite is personal and within reach. Physical well-being exists if you are able to live a long life in good health; mental well-being exists if you retain clear, sharp thinking; psychological well-being exists if you are free of anxiety and depression; and spiritual well-being exists if your life has higher purpose and meaning.”

With more than 40 years of experience as a functional medicine doctor, Tom O'Bryan, DC, DACBN, CIFM, is an internationally recognized speaker and writer on chronic disease and metabolic disorders. He defines graceful aging as a state of full body function, without limitations and with rational expectations for what the body can do. O'Bryan points to the so-called Blue Zones, with an extraordinarily high percentage of people living into their 90s and above, as

examples of those gracefully aging. “The lifestyle of people living in these areas includes daily rituals that reduce stress and reverse the inflammation associated with stress. As a result, they are able to live long, fruitful, happy lives as contributing and engaged members of society,” he notes.

O'Bryan believes that the greatest contribution to living a vital life is identifying and reducing the triggers of inflammation in our bodies, which can largely be accomplished with lifestyle modifications. “According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 of the top 15 causes of death are related to chronic inflammatory diseases. Many people address inflammation with medication, but they don't realize that food is the best medicine,” he explains. “With diet being the largest source of inflammation activation in the body, it's important to question what's on the end of our fork and nourish the body with an anti-inflammatory diet, including berries, leafy greens, garlic, curcumin and plenty of pure water. Your body always wants to be healthier, and if we identify and reduce our exposure to the triggers of inflammation, the inflammation calms down.”

Reducing inflammation also allows the central nervous system to settle into rest-and-digest mode, which can help the body age more gracefully. “Inflammation is the immune system's response to harmful stimuli,” O'Bryan says. “An activated immune system is a life-saving, non-negotiable state that sets our sympathetic nervous system into fight-or-flight mode. When we are stressed or fighting for our lives, our heart rate is fast; our breathing is short, sharp and shallow; and our muscles are tight and ready for action. When inflammation decreases, our bodies are able to calm down and activate the parasympathetic nervous system. In that very relaxed state, your heart rate is slow; your breath is deep; your muscles are relaxed; and your brain is open, expansive and daydreaming of new possibilities in life. That's when healing and regeneration occurs.

Carrie Jackson is a Chicago-based freelance writer. Connect at CarrieJacksonWrites.com.

Letting the Seasons Enrich Us

by Marlaina Donato

For most of us, the first half of our lives is spent tilling the soil of our careers, nourishing family and investing in our dreams. Before we know it, time engraves its signature onto our skin and weaves strands of silver into our hair, and we are presented with the unexpected but inevitable question of what comes next.

The soil of Mother Earth is made fertile only by the debris of seasons. There would be no life without nature's perpetual act of letting go and the sacred and inevitable growth that comes from decay. As we age, like trees in winter, our energy travels deep down into our roots—our bones. Only then can we stand sovereign, a stable foundation for others. Only when we are full of seasons can we offer the sweetest fruit in the form of shared knowledge, skills and hard-earned wisdom. Most of all, we become living examples of the Chinese proverb: "To know the road ahead, ask those coming back."



Accepting the aging process can be challenging and sometimes frightening, but if we lean closer and listen to what the wisdom years have to offer, our journey can become more joyful. The stories of our seasons can be a wellspring bubbling to the surface in conversations, filling empty cups with empathy, hope and humor. We sit at a table called humanity. Let us create a feast of shared experience.

Here are a few ways to enjoy the riches of the journey:

■ Instead of giving a loved one a store-

bought gift to mark an important milestone, write a letter filled with practical and loving advice for the road ahead.

■ Mentor a younger person or peer. Teach them how to make bread, paint a canvas, start a garden, fix a sink or make a quilt. Pay your passions forward

■ Visit a relative or a stranger at a retirement home and ask them to share their stories.

Marlaina Donato is an author, wise-woman mentor and painter. Visit JaguarFlower.art.

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NaturalAwakenings.com

Sharon Bruckman

On Celebrating a Labor of Love

by Sandra Yeyati

In 1994, Sharon Bruckman started a natural health, conscious living magazine called *Natural Awakenings* in Naples, Florida. Within a few years and with the help of partners and collaborators, she turned that single edition into a national franchise. In an industry that has seen so many publications fail, *Natural Awakenings* thrived under her steady leadership, at its zenith amassing 95 franchisee-publishers across the U.S., including Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Last year, Bruckman sold Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation to KnoWEwell, P.B.C., while still retaining her original magazine, essentially switching roles from franchisor to franchisee.

As *Natural Awakenings* celebrates its 30th anniversary, she reflects upon her journey.

What inspired you to launch *Natural Awakenings* magazine?

It was divine intervention. I was going through a big transition in my life and praying about my livelihood—asking God to use my talents and passions to serve others in a way that felt fulfilling—and I heard a voice say, “Start a magazine.” It was surprising, because I had no background in publishing, so I started exploring the possibilities.

I noticed a need for a platform that could bring together all the holistic-living resources available in our community. This

was before smartphones, social media and the internet. If you didn’t see it in print, you didn’t know what was happening in your hometown. Our mission statement today is as clear as it was in 1994: to be a natural lifestyle publication that empowers people in our communities with the knowledge, resources and connections to lead healthier lives on a healthy planet.

How did the decision to turn it into a franchise come about?

I had a knack for starting up small businesses based on passions of mine, but when I launched the first edition of *Natural Awakenings*, I never considered franchising it until I met John Voell II, who had a background in it. The whole thing was intimidating for me, especially in the beginning. I’ve had to step out of my comfort zone most of the time in this business, but I’ve come to understand that being out of my comfort zone isn’t a bad thing. It’s an exciting place where I can grow, open myself to new possibilities and feel most alive.

Luckily, I learned how to manage the business one new franchise at a time, and our staff and skillsets grew with each new publisher who brought their own strengths and perspectives to the family. It became a collaborative environment. I loved how the publishers got used to working together and solving issues.

What are the qualities of a successful team leader?

One is leading with your heart. I discovered that people need to feel valued and hear they’re doing a great job. I often express my appreciation and empower them to let their talents and strengths shine. People need love, kindness and encouragement. I don’t hold onto grudges and come to each encounter fresh. I strive to be open and honest.

I’ve learned over the years how to be a better mediator and negotiator through challenging conversations with publishers

and staff members. The key is to reach for the highest and best result for everyone involved. It isn't about being right. I don't jump to the battlefield. I'll speak my mind about the difficult stuff in a noncombative way—a way that comes from my heart and with openness, so people can feel safe to respond on that level.

To succeed, you also need tenacity, a willingness to work hard and clarity about your mission. Overwhelm is the norm in this business, making it necessary to practice extreme self care. People say my best trait is how well I handle stress and always have a calming effect or attitude.

How did you help the franchisee-publishers succeed?

Working with publishers, you could predict which would thrive and which wouldn't, depending upon their beliefs and statements.

“Being out of my comfort zone is an exciting place where I can grow, open myself to new possibilities and feel most alive.”

The ones that said, “No one wants to advertise,” you knew weren't going to make it because of their attitude. The publishers that worked on their personal growth and on creating and manifesting what they wanted were much more likely to succeed.

At one of our publishers' conferences, I remember motivational speaker Chik Shank of LifePower Seminars had us walking on glass and fire, bending steel bars and performing other amazing feats. We did things we never believed we could do, and it changed your whole perspective. That was one of our most powerful conferences; when people left, they said, “I didn't think I could walk on fire; I guess I can sell an ad.” It's about breaking through belief systems.

Do you have any mantras or personal beliefs that provide strength or resilience?

I like using “I am” statements because they're two of the most powerful words. What you put after them shapes your reality. I'll assert: I am vibrantly healthy. I am loved. I am full of abundance. I am always protected.

I remind myself to stay in the present. When feeling discouraged or challenged, I turn to a YouTube video by Esther Hicks, who says repeatedly, “Everything always works out for me.” The way she says it, accompanied by lovely background music, makes it sound so sensible. If you repeat it enough, you begin to believe it.

Sandra Yeyati is the national editor of Natural Awakenings.



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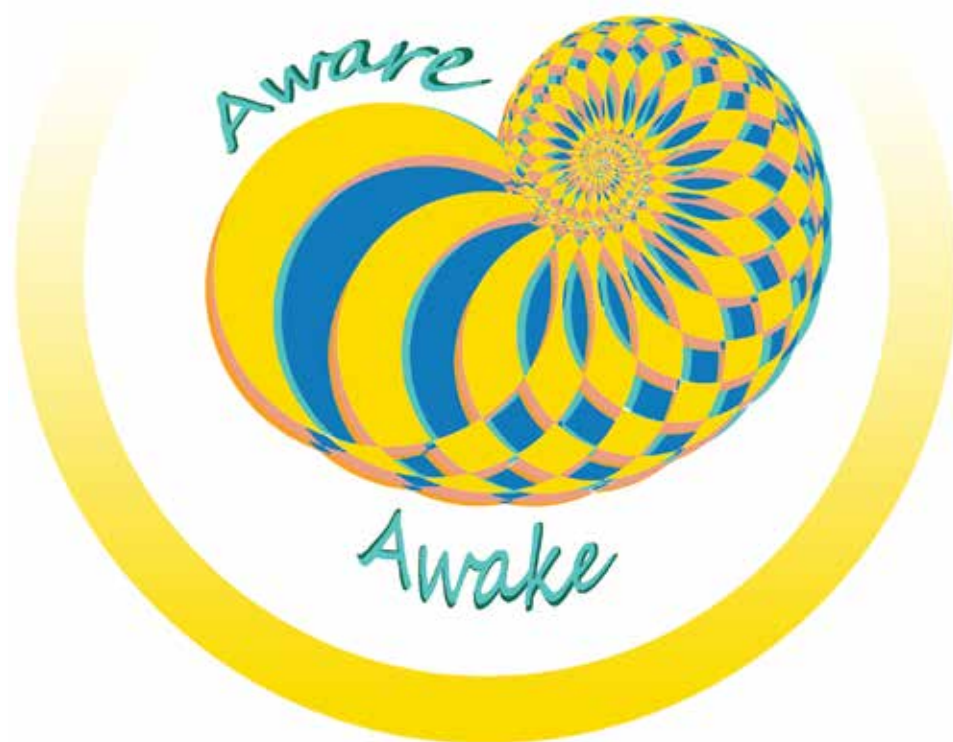
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Elizabeth Bockheim

On Awakening Our Awareness

by Martin Miron

Elizabeth Bockheim, the AwaRNess nurse, is a certified nurse educator, social-emotional intelligence coach and owner of Shine Awareness. For 28 years, she cared for infants in the NICU and is currently a senior instructor at an online university where she instills values such as empathy, resilience and leadership into her curriculum for holistic success. Bockheim is an influential speaker and founder of Shine Awareness, LLC. Based in Southwest Florida, she holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology and is a scuba diver.

What is Awakening Our Awareness?

There are many monthly awareness initiatives such as breast cancer awareness in October, autism awareness in April and self-care awareness

in September. Awareness is an understanding or knowledge that something exists, which inspires enthusiasm and support for action. That includes what is going on inside us, too. According to Diego Navarro, founder of the Academy of College Excellence, in Salt Lake City, "When we are aware, we see things, and once we see them, we cannot un-see them."

What is Self-Awareness?

Self-awareness is especially helpful because it influences our attitude, mindset, beliefs and behaviors toward the achievement of a goal or creating a change. Shifts in behavior that facilitate our overall well-being are often at the top of our to-do lists; physical well-being more so than mental well-being. Most people realize that exercise, diet modifications and

attending yearly check-ups require physical energy. Going to the gym takes effort. Meal planning and shopping for nutritious foods while limiting others takes planning. Scheduling and getting to a doctor's appointments takes intention.

What kind of work does it require to improve mental well-being?

Physical well-being requires some degree of mental well-being. Mental well-being is different in that it requires emotional work. Just as it may be challenging to lift weights or walk three miles, emotional well-being behaviors such as self-reflection and self-awareness like mindfulness and journaling may bring up unpleasant memories. Self-growth comes from self-reflection. Self-reflection is the deliberate consideration of our experiences yielding insight for a better outcome. It requires putting energy into our emotional selves: who we are, what makes us think and behave as we do, and who we wish to be. Awakening your awareness is the first step toward a healthier understanding of ourselves.

What prevents us from overcoming obstacles?

What thoughts or stories do you tell yourself that stop you in your tracks? How often have you asked yourself, "What if I fail?" Has self-doubt caused you to withhold a great idea for fear of being criticized? These are all Obstacle Illusions, perspectives and assumptions that hinder us and get in the way of our success. Reflecting on them is a great starting point to a journey toward a healthier you. Blocked by Obstacle Illusions, we fail to learn lessons we could have discovered by reflecting on those past fears and doubts; when we pushed through and conquered them. It is in our challenges, failures and successes do we become the authentic person we are today. It is by reflecting on our past journeys do we see we are the person we are capable of becoming.

How can we find a choice when it seems there are none?

Another Obstacle Illusion is choice. I have heard myself say, "I didn't have a choice." The fact is we have more choices than we think. When we are waiting for our plane and we learn it is delayed, we have the choice to get outraged or to take a breath and reframe the situation, thinking about how we could

create a better outcome. When we become fueled by a difference of opinion and we lose our cool, we may say, "He made me so mad." We do have a choice instead to be aware of what is going on inside us and ask ourselves in the moment, "What feelings do I feel? What physical sensations are going on in my body?" Think of the Incredible Hulk as he puffs up into the giant, angry super-hero we all know and love: He says, "Hulk mad!" (expressing his feelings, which is good) and "Hulk smash!" (breaking something, which is not good.) There are rare times in life where it is OK for us to turn into the Incredible Hulk with our words or our actions.

What is the way forward?

Awareness is the way forward. Self-reflecting on experiences leads to insight into what is necessary to make shifts in ourselves to improve our relationships and to have more peaceful, grateful, and resilient lives. Though sometimes emotionally hard to do, here are a few strategies to be better today than you were yesterday:

Practice mindfulness: Aim for two minutes twice each day by taking time to be present wherever you are. Put your attention on your breath, noticing how the cool air fills your lungs as you inhale and the warm air as you exhale. Try concentrating on the sounds or aromas around you, or how you are feeling at that moment. If you notice a thought or a sensation, acknowledge it, let it go and then bring your awareness back to the present moment.



Be curious about yourself: What am I feeling at this moment? What do I need? What concerns me the most now? During challenging situations, your answers to these three questions may be the difference between actions you are okay with and those you may regret.

Journal your thoughts: When we write our thoughts down on paper, they become real because they are now in front of us; tangible and visible. Once we see them, we cannot un-see them.

Listen to yourself and take care of you: Self-talk is the loudest talk. If you believe in you, you are more likely to achieve your goals.

Become aware of the choices given to you: Awareness of choice shows us the freedoms we are all searching for. Choice is a value that must be considered and honored.

Practice gratitude: The more we go toward being positive or grateful, the more pathways are created in our brain for these, and the more automatic they become. Begin each day with a moment of gratitude.

Intentionally consider others: Empathy is the most important human attribute to every relationship. Show interest in others so they sense their value and importance.

Self-care: Take care of you. The most generous thing you can do for anyone else is to take care of you.

Self-reflection and self-awareness bring understanding, empathy, value, and connection. They allow us to recognize our own strengths and challenges. Self-reflection and self-awareness empower us to get out of our own way and to remove personal illusions that become obstacles hindering our success. They open our hearts and minds to new ideas and perspectives. Awakening the awareness of the unique person that is you is the first step toward positive health, and emotional and relationship well-being.

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Thyroid-Friendly Eating

How to Treat Hypothyroidism With Food

by Veronica Hinke

Shaped like a butterfly, the thyroid gland in the neck plays a critical role in overall health, as it produces a series of hormones that regulate metabolism, brain development, bone maintenance, and heart, muscle and digestive functions. Thyroid health can be achieved by eating clean, unprocessed foods and maintaining appropriate levels of iodine.

According to the National Institutes of Health, nearly five in 100 Americans suffer from hypothyroidism, which occurs when the body does not produce adequate amounts of thyroid hormones. Common

symptoms like weight gain, fatigue, inability to tolerate cold temperatures and hair loss should not be ignored. Diagnosis is aided by a blood test that measures levels of thyroid-stimulating hormones. While most cases of an underactive thyroid are mild or cause few obvious symptoms, the disease can become severe if it is left untreated.

“Only 10 percent of the population is aware of their thyroid problem and trying to manage it. Thyroid disease is a big thing. If people don’t know if they have it, they should be screened for it. If they have it, they should have hope,” says Alan

Christianson, a naturopathic endocrinologist and author of *The Thyroid Reset Diet: Reverse Hypothyroidism and Hashimoto's Symptoms With a Proven Iodine-Balancing Plan*.

“For women, an especially critical time to check thyroid health is during perimenopause years, when thyroid function can often waver, becoming underactive. Even if lab tests are normal, it is important to speak with a physician that understands the symptoms of hypothyroidism,” says Anna Cabeca, an obstetrician-gynecologist and women’s health expert in Brunswick, Geor-

gia. “Most people can improve or reverse it radically. Diet is very powerful. Start with your shopping list and at the top write: Food is medicine.”

Offering hope, Michigan-based obstetrician-gynecologist Tabatha Barber says, “It’s often about doing less, not more, to help improve thyroid function. Don’t be afraid that this is something you have to live with forever.” As a teenager, Barber was diagnosed with Hashimoto’s disease, an autoimmune condition that affects the thyroid gland and often causes hypothyroidism. She has learned how to modify her diet for relief.

SKIP THE GLUTEN

“Gluten is the main trigger that really seems to irritate the immune system,” says Barber. “A lot of people don’t realize that gluten is in some sauces, salad dressings, seasonings, medication fillers and more. It can be enough to keep the inflammation associated with hypothyroidism going.”

BALANCE IODINE

“Iodine is the Goldilocks mineral,” says Christianson. “It’s important to not consume too much or too little. Those with thyroid disease usually get too much. When they do, it inflames and slows the thyroid.” In such cases, he recommends eating a wide range of unprocessed food and avoiding in-

“It’s about really getting back to basics, eating unprocessed meats, vegetables and some fruits.”

gredients with the highest iodine content, such as fish and other seafood, iodized salt, seaweeds, grains and most dairy.

MONITOR INGREDIENTS

Barber prioritizes the elimination of artificial ingredients and additives, saying, “It’s about really getting back to basics, eating unprocessed meats, vegetables and some fruits.” She recommends consuming foods rich in zinc and selenium, such as shellfish, legumes, seeds, nuts and dairy, as they send signals to the thyroid to produce the right hormone levels.

Cabeca shaves selenium-rich Brazil nuts on soups or salads. “Keep them as a staple in the kitchen,” she advises, adding that balance is important when selecting zinc- and selenium-rich foods because some of them, like dairy, may also contain high levels of iodine.

EAT ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOODS

Cabeca finds clever ways to sneak an-

ti-inflammatory ingredients into her recipes. For her kafta kabobs, for example, she combines ground meat with finely chopped parsley, garlic, tomatoes or dried shiso leaves and tops them with cashew butter or tahini sauce. Similarly, she uses plenty of parsley in her tabouleh—a traditional Middle Eastern salad—and replaces the customary bulgur wheat with chopped Brussels sprouts or cauliflower.

According to Northwestern Medicine, cauliflower can be part of a healthy thyroid diet, along with other cruciferous vegetables. “These are foods that I grew up on,” Cabeca says, noting that parsley is a natural diuretic that is also good for the thyroid.

Veronica Hinke is a food historian and author of The Last Night on the Titanic: Unsinkable Drinking, Dining and Style; Titanic: The Official Cookbook and Harry Potter: Afternoon Tea Magic. Learn more at FoodStringer.com.



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YIELD: 4 TO 6 SERVINGS

*3 Tbsp chia seeds
1 cup unsweetened flax milk
1 Tbsp maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup kiwi, peeled and diced (about 3 fruits)
2 Tbsp pistachios, chopped*

Add the ingredients, except pistachios, to a blender and blend for one to two minutes until smooth. Pour into a bowl, cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Garnish with chopped pistachios.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Dr. Alan Christianson, NMD, from The Hormone Healing Cookbook.



HEALING BROTH

*2 onions
2 heads of garlic
3 -5 cups of fresh mushrooms (I like to add a variety of wild mushrooms)
2 leeks
2 bunches of celery (stalks and tops)
5 carrots
5 red potatoes
1 bell pepper
1 bunch of Swiss chard (stalks and leaves) or kale
2 bunches of fresh spinach
1 cup of broccoli
1 cup of cauliflower
1 bunch of parsley
Anything fresh and green
Sea salt to taste
Fresh blend of herbs (oregano, basil, sage, thyme, and rosemary are the favorites)
1-2 sheets of kombu (dried seaweed)
In the fall and winter, I like to add turnips and parsnips*

In the vitamix or blender, combine onions, garlic and 2 cups of the mushrooms, until you get a thick consistency. In a large pot add all the other vegetables, along with the blended mixture. Add the remaining mushrooms on top. Cover with generous amounts of pure water and bring to a gentle boil. Then simmer for about 2 hours. Add the fresh herbs and sea salt at this time.

I also will cook this over the course of a few days, allowing the flavors to deepen.

I make this weekly in bulk and use it as a base in other soups, crockpot dishes, and Pho.

*Best Health,
Recipe courtesy of Jess Dobracki
JSDobracki@gmail.com*

BANANA TEA

YIELD: 4 CUPS

1-2 organic banana

1-2 decaffeinated tea bag of choice. (I tend to use something with a vanilla or cinnamon flavor)

Sprinkle of Ceylon cinnamon

Cut ends off of the banana and toss.

Slice banana with skin on and place in a pot of pure water.

Boil the banana for approximately 5 to 8 minutes until its soft.

Turn heat off and add tea bag to steep.

Pour into tea mug and sprinkle cinnamon on top.

This is my go-to for a good night's sleep. So many people ask me about this.

I typically enjoy this about 1 hour before bed. The magnesium in the banana peel allows the body to relax into a deep sleep naturally.

Best Health,

Recipe courtesy of Jess Dobracki

JSDobracki@gmail.com

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Finding the Right Eco-Friendly Roof

While a house is usually a family's biggest investment, improvements can be made to make it an environmental asset, too.

SOLAR PANELS

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, just one hour of sunlight can provide the Earth with enough energy to power the globe for an entire year. Solar panels are a remarkable technology to harness that abundant energy and convert it into clean electricity. By installing solar panels on roofs, homeowners can significantly reduce their reliance on conventional energy sources and contribute to a greener future.

Aside from their environmental benefits, solar panels can also save money on electricity bills. Research by Solar Reviews concludes that solar panel systems can pay for themselves within nine to 12 years through energy savings and various incentives. Plus, according to The Appraisal Journal, a home's value can increase by \$20 for every \$1 reduction in yearly energy bills, making solar an excellent long-term investment. To get an estimate on how much can be saved by installing solar panels on a home, visit UnderstandSolar.org.

GREEN ROOFS

Imagine transforming a roof into a vibrant oasis teeming with lush vegetation and blooming flowers. Green roofs consist of layers of soil, plants and a waterproofing system, which work together to create a natural haven atop buildings.

The Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings commissioned an in-depth

metadata analysis of 200 green-roof research studies. The analysis reported multiple benefits from living roofs. They act as insulators, reducing the need for heating and cooling and thereby lowering energy consumption.

Green roofs add beauty and value to the building and are expected to last twice as long as conventional roofs. They also improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen; reduce the urban heat-island effect; and retain rainwater,

thereby mitigating stormwater runoff and preventing the flow of pollutants into rivers and lakes.

Green roofs provide new habitats for plants, birds, insects and other wildlife that struggle to find shelter in concrete jungles. By bringing nature back into cities, we can foster biodiversity and create a more harmonious coexistence between humans and the natural world. Visit SFTool.gov for more information on green roofs.





THURSDAY, JANUARY 4

Virtual Holiday Yoga – Crysterra Wellness is offering 3 class options: Restorative Yoga, 9:30am; Gentle Basic Flow Yoga, 6:30pm; Yoga Nidra, 7:30pm. \$15/class, \$50 unlimited. For more info: 734-649-1849. Register: Andrea@CrysterraWellness.com. CrysterraWellness.com.

Just for Kids: Intro to Great Cheese – 3-4pm. We'll talk about how cheese is made, taste our way through examples of the classics and demonstrate the process of making mozzarella. With cheese expert Tessie Ives-Wilson. \$25. Zingerman's Delicatessen, 422 Detroit St, Ann Arbor. 734-663-3354. ZingermansDeli.com.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5

Sound Bath Meditation – 7-8:30pm. Celebrate the New Year with Rob Meyer-Kukan. In this time of sound bath, Rob will play singing bowls, gongs and more with the intention of washing you with the sounds that bring calming vibrations to reduce stress and ease tension. \$40. 7 Notes Natural Health, 3830 Packard Rd, Ste 120, Ann Arbor. 248-962-5475. Registration required: [Forms.gle/uERPGBtUr491ekR69](https://forms.gle/uERPGBtUr491ekR69).

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

Dexter Winter Marketplace – 9am-1pm. Features art and crafts, bread and baked goods, jewelry, fresh produce, eggs, cheese, meats and more. Dexter United Methodist Church, 7643 Huron River Dr, Dexter. DexterMarket.com.

Grand Opening Party: New Year, New You – 10am-2pm. Enjoy a free small plates brunch. First 50 people in the door receive a swag bag. Grand prize giveaway drawings every hour. Bring a friend and receive a free gift. RSVP on the website event, print your ticket, and bring it in to receive an additional free gift. Will be doing free facial analysis, mini-card readings and reiki consults. Free. Universal Energy Wellness Spa, 470 Forest Ave, Ste 22, Plymouth. 734-934-7271. For appt: UniversalEnergyWellness.com.

New Year Mindfulness Hike – 2-3:30pm. This meditative hike is focused on reconnecting with yourself and the natural world, which can be quite restorative during this dark time of the year. Led by naturalist Elle Bogle. Burns-Stokes Preserve, 2905 N Zeeb Rd, Dexter. Pre-registration required: Washtenaw.org.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

Sunrise Nature Hike – 8:30-10am. Enjoy the brisk morning air as we wander the preserve and discover winter's hidden wonderments. Led by naturalist Elle Bogle. Goodrich Preserve, 3695 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. Pre-registration required: Washtenaw.org.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

How to Assess, Manage & Preserve Your Land – 6-7:30pm. Join your Ypsilanti Township neighbors and representatives to learn about the benefits of and opportunities for farmland and natural area preservation. Landowners are encouraged to attend to discuss individual properties with staff from local conservation organizations. Ypsilanti Civic Center, 7200 S Huron River Dr Ypsilanti. Registration requested: LegacyLandConservancy.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

Ski and Snowboard Swap – Jan 13 & 14. 9am-6pm, Sat; 11am-5pm, Sun. Families can enjoy incredible savings on lightly used gear and closeouts, plus receive personalized fitting expertise. Individuals can also bring their ski gear to sell or swap before the event. Sun and Snow, 3780 Jackson Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-663-9515. SunAndSnow.com/service/swap.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

Monthly Group Sound Bath – 4-5:30pm. Rev Amy Feger, Shaman and Reiki Master, applies her unique techniques in sound healing to the group experience. \$15. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-210-1312. SacredWhisperTeachings@gmail.com. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

Dexter Winter Marketplace – 9am-1pm. Features art and crafts, bread and baked goods, jewelry, fresh produce, eggs, cheese, meats and more. Dexter United Methodist Church, 7643 Huron River Dr, Dexter. DexterMarket.com.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

Winter Wander – 10-11:30am. Spend the late morning enjoying the winter sights and sounds of spectacular forests and the Huron River. Burns-Stokes Preserve, 2905 N Zeeb Rd, Dexter. Pre-registration required: Washtenaw.org.

MONDAY, JANUARY 22

How to Assess, Manage & Preserve Your Land – 6-7:30pm. Join your Saline Township neighbors and representatives to learn about the benefits of and opportunities for farmland and natural area preservation. Landowners are encouraged to attend to discuss individual properties with staff from local conservation organizations. Saline Township Hall, 5731 Braun Rd, Saline. Registration requested: LegacyLandConservancy.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

Understanding Karma and Reincarnation for a Better Life – 7-8pm. Do you have a special gift or knack for something that just came naturally? Could it be from a past life experience? A deeper understanding can make a difference in your life. Free. Zoom. EckMI.org/events.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

Webinar: Cultivating Change – 6-7pm. With Lorraine Johnson. Join Wild Ones for a practical and insightful discussion on gardening's positive impact on the environment and our future. Free. AnnArbor.WildOnes.org. Register: Tinyurl.com/CultivatingChangeWebinar.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26

Ann Arbor Folk Festival – Jan 26-27. Includes a blend of well-known and up-and-coming artists, providing an opportunity to hear artists you know and love while discovering great new talent. More info & locations: TheArk.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

Stonefly Search – 9 & 10:30am start times. HRWC does stonefly searches to gauge the health of our streams. When you sign up to volunteer, you will join a small group of other volunteers to search a selected stretch of stream or river for stoneflies. Huron River Watershed Council, 117 N 1st St, #100, Ann Arbor. 734-769-5123. hrwc.org/volunteer/stonefly.

Women and Teen Girl Self-Defense Course – Jan 27-28. 9:30am-2:30pm. With Fighting Spirit Personal Safety. A comprehensive approach to safety training that includes awareness, risk reduction, posture and verbal skills, as well as physical skills. \$175. Midwest Tae Kwon Do, 584B W Ann Arbor Trl, Plymouth. Register: Tinyurl.com/Women-Self-Defense-Course.

Full Moon Owl Hike – 6-8pm. With senses heightened by night, we will call for owls and experience nature after dark. Led by Shawn Severance and Matt Spoor from Washtenaw Audubon. Burns-Stokes Preserve, 2905 N Zeeb Rd, Dexter. Pre-registration required: Washtenaw.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

Demystifying Vision Boards: Manifest Your Best 2024 – Jan 31, Feb 7 & 14. 6:30-8:30pm. Class explores the ways in which we manifest, how to create our vision, develop our focus and attention, construct powerful affirmations. \$88. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-358-0218. Register: nmwunveiled.com/vision2024. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

Ongoing Events

Daily

Herbs for the Southeast Michigan Garden – Learn how to grow and use 20 culinary and medicinal herbs suited for the southeast Michigan garden. Will cover preservation techniques, basic medicine making and crafting herbal oils, poultices, infused honeys and vinegars plus more. Free. More info & register: CastleRemedies.podia.com.

Introduction to Homeopathy Class – Learn how to choose remedies and how to use them. Class contains nearly 4 hrs of pre-recorded videos. Downloadable resources. \$75. More info & register: CastleRemedies.podia.com.

Holistic Health Consultation – 9am-7pm. Online or phone consultation consultations last about 1 hr and are provided by Certified Xolar Vibronics Holistic Educator and Life Coach Ikaro Phoenix. Be introduced to various techniques, elements or holistic ways of viewing the situation which help the soul to be reeducated and empowered to deal with problems and eliminate them from their root. \$150. For appt: LivingWisdomCoaching.earth.

Pets & Parents Reiki Session – 9am-9pm. Sessions for wellness, critical care and end of life transition. Actively experience the use of reiki touch with your pet. Learn additional tips for helping your pet. Virtual 40-min appt. \$20. 231-590-0001. TCDesoto@gmail.com.

The Best Affirmation for You – 10am. Learn about the power of affirmations and how they can bring about positive events and circumstances. Call for a 10-15-min consultation with a licensed professional counselor to pick the best affirmation for you. Purchase an affirmation stone to enhance what you are affirming in your life by having a visible reminder. Free. 734-644-6943. Harmony2c.com/affirmation-stones.

Tiny Lions Lounge & Adoption Center (TLC) – 12-7pm, Wed-Sun. Offers feline-friendly activities with kittens and cats available to take home. 5245 Jackson Rd, Ste A1, 734-661-3575. TinyLions.org.

Weekly

Yoga with Crysterra Wellness – Variety of classes Tues-Thurs. Cost varies. For schedule & details: CrysterraWellness.com.

Stop Sabotaging Your Self-Care – Christy DeBurton will guide you on a journey of self-discovery to examine the obstacles that stand in the way of you taking better care of yourself. 4-wk self-paced online course. \$79 (regular \$149). Yoga Room, 889 Honey Creek Dr, Ann Arbor. Info@ChristyDeBurton.com. YogaRoomAnnArbor.com/online-courses-self-care.

Sundays

Bach Flower Remedies Level 1 LiveWeb – 3rd Sun. Learn how to use the 38 Bach flower remedies to help yourself and others conquer fear, worry, overwhelm, low self-esteem, lack of focus, poor concentration, trouble sleeping and more. With Nancy Buono, BFCP, Director of Bach Flower Education. BachFlowerSchool.com.

Hudson Valley Humane Society Rescue Reading – 10am-12pm. Includes humane education lessons, group read-aloud and dog meet-and-greet. Drop-off event. \$10; space limited. HSHV.org/RescueReading.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 11am-12pm. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: Celeste Zygmunt2@yahoo.com or DeepSpring.org.

Sunday Talk with Demo Rinpoche – 11am-12pm. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.



Drop-In Tarot Study Group – 6:30-9pm. A drop-in group of tarot enthusiasts facilitated by Nicholas O'Donnell, using the Rider-Waite Tarot Deck. \$15. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-299-6472. NicksVictoryGardens@gmail.com. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

Inspiring Talk by Mata Yogananda – 7pm. Spiritual talk, pure meditation and silent prayer, with Winged Prayer for all in need at 9pm. Free. Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller, Bath. 517-641-6201. SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Monday

Weekday Morning Online Meditation – Mon-Fri. 7:30-8am. Insight Meditation Ann Arbor offers a 30-min online group sitting via Zoom. Free, donations gratefully accepted. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Beginner Tai Chi – 10-11:15am. A series of postures linked together in fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). \$195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Soul Power Mystic Arts – 5pm. 2nd Mon & Wed. Re-claim the real you, hear

your evolutionary calling, and cultivate the nature mystic within through four retreats, individual training, self-acceptance process, nature qigong, plant ally ceremonies, and body-ecology psychology. Sliding scale. Mother Bear Sanctuary, 20470 Barton, Pinckney. 734-796-6690. MotherBearSanctuary.com.

Meaningful Mondays – 8pm. SevaLight Retreat Centre warmly welcomes everyone, of all faiths, meditation practices and traditions, to join us virtually. Will gather on video conference sharing in song/chants and inspiring readings from Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharmaji's writings, followed by Pure Meditation and silent prayer. Free. Email by 10am any Monday to receive the info about how to join by video: Info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Tuesdays

Senior Discount Tuesdays: Castle Remedies – Customers over the age of 65 can receive a 10% discount on their in-store purchases. In the Parkway Center, 2345 S Huron Pkwy, Ann Arbor. 734-973-8990. CastleRemedies.com.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 9-9:30am. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: Celeste Zygmunt2@yahoo.com or DeepSpring.org.

Hypnotherapy – 9:30am-7pm, by appt. Also Wed. Cheryl Beshada teaches and specializes in personal empowerment, releasing blocks and patterns of negative behavior, higher self-communication. Free consultation. Warren. 586-899-9009.

Wednesdays

Get the Most from Your DNA Test – 6-8pm. Learn what you can do with your results and what additional opportunities are available for discovering your genetic genealogy. Understand the science, how to find information and how to share that information. Course 39651. \$59. Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E Huron River Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-677-5060. wccnet.edu/noncredit.

Thursdays

Class Observation – 11-11:45am. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Qigong: Basics – 11:15am-12:15pm. Class introduces participants to basic self-care stretches, breathing, meditations and self-acupressure for reducing muscle tension, increasing mindfulness, and revitalization. \$180. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Beginner Tai Chi – 6-7:15pm. A series of postures linked together in fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). \$195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Thursday Hills of Ann Arbor – 6:30pm. We ride some of the best hills A2 has to offer. A/B/C: 10-40 miles Start at Wheels in Motion, 3402 Washtenaw Ave Ann Arbor. WheelsInMotion.us.

Thursday Evening Silent Meditation – 6:30-8:15pm. With Insight Meditation Ann Arbor. Free, donations gratefully accepted. Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor. 734-994-4455. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Meditation Class – 7-8pm. Short lesson and meditation, followed by discussion with instructor Lori Barresi. Drop-in, every other Thur. \$10. Enlightened Soul Center, 3820 Packard, Ste 280, Ann Arbor. 734-358-0218. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

Fridays

Online: Prayer Power Hour – 12-12:30pm. Prayer changes things. Our goal is simple:

to love you, pray for you, and introduce you to our loving Creator, the Great Healer. Free. Tinyurl.com/PrayerPowerHour.

Esoteric Tarot for Beginners – 7-8:30pm. Drop-in study group with Nick O'Donnell. Features the bare bones and basics of tarot symbolism to get you reading the cards immediately. Every class will explore the basics of 4 cards per session. \$15 suggested donation. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-358-0218. fb.me/e/2MeGXs0VE.

Saturdays

Certified Hypnotherapists Education and Networking Meeting – 9:30am-12pm. 1st Sat. Certified Hypnotherapists welcome. Includes educational presentation, workbook and digital material. Clinical Hypnosis Professional Group, Warren. Register: 586-899-9009.

Pregnancy, Childbirth, Postpartum and Baby Classes – 6-7pm. Classes are held virtually online lead by our top AID instructors utilizing state of the art visual aids and activities to keep it fun and engaging while presenting the latest evidenced based material on each topic. \$35/class. Childbirth-Classes.com.

Classifieds

Help Wanted

RELAXSTATION, VOTED A2'S BEST MASSAGE, IS HIRING! Our massage therapists earn \$35K to \$40K annually as W-2 employees for a 30-hour (including breaks) weekly schedule. New location on Packard Street between Argus Farm Stop and the Buddhist Temple offers traditional full body massage as well as fully clothed table massage, plus onsite chair massage at UT and local businesses. Free parking. Friendly, diverse and supportive community of co-workers. Relaxstation.com. Ask for Carrie, 734-623-1951.

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734-302-7300
EmanueleAcupuncture.com



Rosanne Emanuele is a licensed acupuncturist, certified by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). Her acupuncture methods are the result of 25 years of full-time practice. Clients enjoy the results they achieve from her individually assessed treatments. Her easy friendly manner makes her skills seem casual and second nature. First-time patients are often thrilled by the lack of pain and the rapid improvement in their condition. See ad page 13.

Aromatherapy

ROSY GLOW AROMATHERAPY

Margo Hertzfeld, Certified Aromatherapist
419-360-0169
RosyGlowWellness.com



Clinically certified aromatherapist offers holistic consultations with customized blends of professional quality essential oils. Trust Margo to help you understand the complicated world of aromatherapy. Her holistic approach can help you maximize your benefits from this powerful therapy and minimize side effects. Aromatherapy is a wonderful way to integrate natural healing into your life. Phone consultations are available.

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ANN ARBOR'S DENTIST

Dr. W. K. Dobracki, DDS
606 W Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, 48103
734-747-6400
DrDobracki@AnnArborsDentist.com
AnnArborsDentist.com



Passionate about holistic care while utilizing Bio-Compatible materials and lasers. Our patients can elect to be free from fluoride, mercury and other harmful metals. Filling materials are tooth colored and both BPA & Bis-GMA free. We offer natural oral health products using fine essential oils, and free of gluten and preservatives. See ad page 3.

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121 E Liberty, Ann Arbor
734-707-1955
Info@CinnaholicAnnArbor.com
CinnaholicAnnArbor.com



Cinnaholic is a locally owned bakery specializing in custom gourmet cinnamon rolls and homemade cookie dough, brownies and cookies. We cater to any size event with customizable catering options. All our products are made with the highest quality ingredients and are 100% vegan. See ad page 25.

Detox/Colonic

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Brandy Boehmer, 734-709-8313
2350 Washtenaw Ave, Ste 14, Ann Arbor
InnerSpaceHolistic.com



Colon Therapy is the slow and gentle insertion of purified water into the colon (large intestine) for the cleansing of poisons, mucous and accumulated fecal matter. It is also used to stimulate the colon to recover its natural shape, tone, and peristaltic wave action. No chemicals or drugs are used—thus it is a safe, gentle, health-giving alternative. Brandy Boehmer is National Board Certified in colon hydrotherapy through the International Association for Colon Therapy.

Education

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School of Pharmacy
Tinyurl.com/CUWnatural



Earn your Master's in Natural Product Sciences with our 30-credit online program. This graduate degree, with concentrations in medical cannabis and nutraceuticals, can lead to jobs in health care, pharmacy research and development, manufacturing and business. See ad page 23.

Holistic Doctor

DR. MALCOLM SICKELS, M.D.

210 Little Lake Dr, Ste 10, Ann Arbor
734-332-9936
DrSickels.com



Malcolm Sickels earned his M.D. from the University of Michigan, where he taught fellow medical students about different approaches to health. Board certified in Family

Medicine and Holistic Medicine, he is in solo practice on the west side of Ann Arbor. Learn more at Dr.Sickels.com. See ads, pages 9 and 10.

Holistic Mental Wellness

CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE COUNSELING

Karen Kerr, LMSW
2010 Hogback Road, Ste. 6E, Ann Arbor
(734) 660-5610
Karen8Kerr@gmail.com
KarenPKerr.com



In offering a caring, collaborative and supportive experience, I draw upon a holistic approach with a rich variety of practices designed to deepen awareness, uplift mood, manage stress and develop a stronger sense of self-worth, purpose, connection and joy in life.

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In the Parkway Center
734-973-8990
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Serving Michigan for nearly 40 years. Castle Remedies offers over 1,000 homeopathic remedies as well as herbs, essential oils, flower essences, books, unique gifts and jewelry. We carry top-tier nutritional supplement brands such as Metagenics, Ortho Molecular, Xymogen, Integrative Therapeutics, Karuna, NOW, and more. Classes available online. See ad page 17.



Life Coaching

LEAN INTO YOUR LIFE

LeanFowardLife@gmail.com
734-249-9948
LeanIntoYourLife.net



Gary Merel offers the tools needed to create the life you envision. He is an effective catalyst that will help you unravel your life's dilemmas. Gary will help you to ignite your innate wisdom enabling you to see a clear path for your life.

Lymphatic Bodywork/ Reiki

ELEVATE MIND & BODYWORK

Sarah Girard BS, LMT
1140 N. Wagner Rd. Ann Arbor
SarahGirard.Lmt@gmail.com
Elevate.MassageTherapy.com



Take your wellness & spiritual journey to the next level. Sarah combines traditional "medical" Manual Lymphatic Drainage techniques with Reiki healing, breathing guidance, visualization & intuitive listening.

All sessions are heart-centered, gentle, and geared towards radical self-love. Request an appointment today.

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MOLDPRO

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MoldPro offers chemical-free mold remediation, independent certified mold testing, inspection and consultation services all over SE Michigan specializing in mold biotoxin illness clients.

Nature-Oriented Meeting Space

**MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER
AT FRIENDS LAKE COMMUNITY**
7748 Clark Lake Road, Chelsea
734-475-1892
MFCenter.org/rent



We offer the holistic community a nature-oriented meeting space for workshops, meetings, counseling, yoga, youth groups and family gatherings. Main room accommodates 100 pre-COVID-19, with two smaller classrooms and kitchen facilities. Hiking trails. Weekend

rates range from \$200-\$400, additional for extensive grounds use, camping. See ad page 9.

Relief from Trauma, Anxiety & Depression

ACT ABSOLUTE CHOICES TODAY COUNSELING

NANCY WARNARS, LPC
OperationAbleNancyW@gmail.com
248-845-0513
AbsoluteChoicesTherapy.com



Virtual Teletherapy for all ages. Immediate appointments available. Accepting most insurance. Office in East Lansing. Change happens when you take responsibility to create thinking that supports ways to feel better. Family of origin,

groups and media can have a profound effect on your inner being. Letting go of the negativity is critical to co-create new pathways toward hope, peace and love for the life you have a choice to envision.

School/Education

ANN ARBOR SCHOOL OF MASSAGE, HERBAL & NATURAL MEDICINE

734-769-7794
NSHAAssociates@gmail.com
NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net



Massage therapy training is a one-year program that fulfills the 717-hour, state-licensed professional training with the required 80 hours of clinical internship. The rate for scheduled, Tuesday through Friday appointments at our student massage clinic is \$50/hr. See ad page 29.

Smoking Cessation

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734-883-8775



Stop smoking in one visit. Afraid it's going to be too painful or too difficult? Our unique specialized and proven system makes it easy. Become a happy and permanent non-smoker today. See

ad page 11.

Tai Chi & Qigong

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1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor
734-741-0695
PeacefulDragonSchool.com



Tai chi promotes relaxation, is a meditation in motion and is known for increasing balance. Qigong means energy work. This class includes stretching, meditation and self-acupressure.

Weight Loss

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OFFICE HOURS:

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